

The American Spectator

Now, Seize Freedom!

By Thaddeus G. McCotter on 11.5.08 @ 6:07AM

Welcome to "Republican Rock Bottom."

Possessed of no vision, no principle, no purpose, and no appeal, we deserved our fate.

Now, seize freedom!

Finally, we are divorced from self-deceits. Dead is the self-indulgent imbecility of "re-branding" -- as if the Republican Party was a corporate product to be repackaged, not a transformational political movement to be led. Despite what the media will tell you, and what so-called "conservative leaders" will discuss *ad nauseam* during "secret" meetings, this situation is not a crisis. It is an opportunity. Today, we are as the Great Emancipator proclaimed during another time of national trial: unbound by the tired dogmas of the past; and free to think and act anew.

First, we must not mindlessly mimic the momentarily triumphant Left. Sleek, detached, media savvy non-entities posing as existentially anguished leaders are neither in our nature nor our future. We are not teeny-bopper, pop-star politicians or the ideological dinosaurs of wealth redistribution.

At heart, we Republicans are flesh and blood and backbone, the proud servants of people. If we re-orient our vision, renew our purpose, and reaffirm our principles, the times will demand us -- not as we were, but *as we must be!*

While our party has pretended otherwise, this is no ordinary time. It is a transformative time in the life of our free republic. The economic, social, and political turmoil of rapid globalization has created chaos and, thereby, fertile fields for the Left. As Russell Kirk warned in *The American Cause* during the Industrial Age:

What really creates discontent in the modern age, as in all ages, is confusion and uncertainty. People turn to radical doctrines not necessarily when they are poor, but when they are emotionally and intellectually distraught. When faith in their world is shaken; when old rulers and old forms of government disappear; when profound economic changes alter their modes of livelihood; when the expectation of private and public change becomes greater than the expectation of private and public continuity; when even the family seems imperiled; when people can no longer live as their ancestors lived before them, but wander bewildered in new

ways -- then the radical agitator, of one persuasion or another, has a fertile field to cultivate.

Fertile, indeed, are America's fields for the Left. In their *Reflections on the York, PA, Focus Group (July 3, 2008)*, Peter Hart and Alex Horowitz studied 12 working Americans in a county President Bush won by a margin of nearly 2-1. In the excerpts below, we encounter working Americans' despair about tomorrow:

This (focus group) was among the most difficult and disturbing that I can remember.... The group sees this election as being about big issues, not some of the small ones... The America they see is facing major and serious issues, and it is in need of visionary and serious solutions to its problems... These participants do not speak in terms of policy details and do not focus on numbers or the candidates' platforms... The fault lines in this group are about a deeper and more personal sense of how the world is right now and what the country needs."

But the authors' dismay pales before that of two working women staring into the abyss of the despicably christened "Post-American World":

Sheryl: *"I just don't see (my children) being as successful, even as I was. And I'm not even as successful as my father was...I'm a single mom, and I'm taking care of three kids. And, I just...want to make it better for them too. So I'm thinking we do need change. I'm not sure that either one of the candidates are going to bring the changes that we need, but we certainly need change to make it better for (my children)...."*

Janell: *"Well, I think that, for most of my life, my decisions have been made, based on morals and family values, and like that whole belief system that I've had instilled in me since birth. And now, all of a sudden, our country is just like turned upside down with all these economic issues that we, I haven't encountered in my lifetime. And it's really making me second-guess, you know, voting for those ideals, instead of voting for some of the other issues that need to be dealt with."*

Sheryl and Janell are *Republicans*.

How do you think Sheryl and Janell felt about their party when it abandoned principle for expediency, and proposed and helped pass the \$700 billion Wall Street bailout? If this -- the greatest expansion of government into the private sector since the "New Deal" -- was "just a little socialism to prevent a lot of socialism later," why won't Main Street demand the same little bits of socialism to tide them over? Clearly, if Republicans refuse to accept globalization as a process to be channeled into constructive change for Americans, the public will continue to demand we remain the minority party.

This will not happen, if at Republican Rock Bottom we think and act anew.

At a similar transformational time, amidst the Great Depression's economic disruption and despair, Franklin Delano Roosevelt asserted the need for "leaders of thought at times when certain historic ideas in the life of the nation had to be clarified." Amen. Thus, Republicans must heed Demosthenes' plea to his endangered fellow Athenians -- "In God's name, I beg of you to think!"

Heeding this call, I submit the following:

Why is there a Republican Party? We exist to keep America the greatest nation on earth.

What is the Republican Party's vision of America's present and future? We believe America simultaneously faces and must transcend four transformational, generational challenges.

Specifically, Republicans see the historical parallels between the Greatest Generation and our Global Generation.

America's Greatest Generation surmounted a quartet of transformational challenges: economic, social, and political upheavals; a world war against an evil; the Soviet Union's rise as a strategic threat and rival model of governance; and the moral struggle for equal civil rights.

Today, America's Global Generation must also transcend a quartet of transformational challenges born of our interconnected world: economic, social and political upheavals; a global war against an evil enemy; Communist China's rise as a strategic threat and rival model of governance; and moral relativism's erosion of our nation's foundational, self-evident truths.

What are the Republican Party's principles that will be employed to meet and surmount these challenges? We have five enduring principles:

1. Our liberty is from God not the government.
2. Our sovereignty rests in our souls not the soil.
3. Our security is through strength not surrender.
4. Our prosperity is from the private sector not the public sector.
5. Our truths are self-evident not relative.

What are the Republican Party's goals? We will advance liberty, preserve tradition, and achieve constructive change for Americans in this trying time.

This we will do!

So, please, don't despair at Republican Rock Bottom. Despite our party's dark hour in this dawning millennium, by thinking and acting anew, Republicans will champion American principles and ensure that our nation remains inspired and

guided by the virtuous genius of our free people; and forever blessed by the unfathomable grace of God. *We will seize freedom. We will be freedom!*

United States Representative **Thaddeus G. McCotter**
is chair of the Republican House Policy Committee.